

October 15, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) took part in President Barack Obama's first visit to Louisiana during his administration. Following the visit, Congressman Melancon made the following statement:

"President Obama's visit to Louisiana put a national spotlight on the progress we've made and reminded Americans that our recovery is not complete," said Rep. Melancon. "We are grimly watching our coastal wetlands disappear and desperately-needed hurricane protection projects are still stalled by red tape and lack of funding.

"But today, we were able to get our President, our Governor, our legislators and our neighbors all in one room to talk about how we finish the job. Now it's time to deliver for Louisiana."

Congressman Melancon has worked in Congress to secure federal investments to [protect south Louisiana's coastal communities](#) from storms and rebuild the disappearing wetlands. Believing that south Louisiana's future depends on taking dramatic action today, Melancon has [introduced](#) and [supported](#) various bills that authorize comprehensive coastal restoration projects for the state.

By preserving and restoring the marshes and wetlands that buffer our coast from storms, these projects will provide greater hurricane protection for communities in south Louisiana. They will also protect Louisiana's critical oil and gas infrastructure and the habitat and ports that supply 30% of the seafood consumed in the United States.

Restoring Louisiana's coast will require a multi-billion dollar investment from both the state and federal governments. In 2006, Congressman Melancon and the Louisiana delegation won a [major victory](#) in the battle to save the coast when Congress finally gave Louisiana a dedicated federal revenue stream that, over the years, will provide billions of dollars for coastal restoration projects. The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act gave Louisiana a substantial share of federal royalties from oil and natural gas drilling off the state's coast for coastal restoration, hurricane protection and flood control projects. The historic legislation, which opened up millions of acres in Gulf for exploration and drilling, is projected to provide for Louisiana a dedicated revenue stream of more than \$13 billion over the next 30 years.

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